

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended paragraph:

Fault tolerant techniques to update a distributed database in a switched-fabric network ~~are described~~. A commit master switch initiates an update operation using a four-phase process that provides for the automatic fail-over to a second (or more) switches if the commit master should not complete the update operation. In response to a lost commit master switch, one or more switches may assume the role of the commit master to either abort or complete the update operation.